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Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /062 W
---------- 003410
R 271425Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 996
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2459

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PINS, RH, ZA
SUBJECT: FURTHER BORDER INCIDENTS REPORTED

REF: LUSAKA 2432, GABORONE 1627

1. ZAMBIAN PRESS NOV 22 REPORTED THREE PERSONS KILLED AND SIX OTHERS INJURED WHEN LANDMINE BLEW UP IN GWEMBE DISTRICT, SOUTHERN PROVINCE, ON NOV 19. UNIP SPOKESMAN QUOTED AS CONFIRMING TRAGEDY AND BLAMING ZAMBIA'S "ENEMIES" FOR BLAST. HE PLEDGED CONTINUED ZAMBIAN DETERMINATION TO DEFEND COUNTRY AND TO SUPPORT LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

2. PRESS ON NOV 25 REPORTED NEW EXCHANGE OF SHOTS AT KAZUNGULA FERRY ON MORNING NOV 23. FERRY, WHICH ONLY RESTORED TO OPERATION OV 22 FOLLOWING LAST WEDNESDAY'S INCIDENT (REFTEL), WAS AGAIN DESERTED BY CREW BUT ONLY FOR A FEW HOURS. SOUTHERN PROVINCE UNIP SECRETARY ON NOV 25
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ISSUED STATEMENT REASSURING VILLAGERS AND CUS-

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TOMS OFFICIALS IN KAZUNGULA AREA THAT GOVERNMENT DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO SAFEGUARD THEIR LIVES AND CALLING ON THEM NOT TO PANIC AND LEAVE THEIR VILLAGES AND FIELDS.

3. COMMENT: THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER OFFICIAL REFERENCES TO GWEMBE LANDMINE INCIDENT FOLLOWING INITIAL PRESS REPORT OF NOV 22. WE UNDERSTAND INVESTIGATION BEING CONDUCTED BY ARMY RATHER THAN ZAMBIAN POLICE. THIS IS FIRST SUCH LANDMINE INCIDENT REPORTED INSIDE ZAMBIAN TERRITORY SINCE 1973. WHILE OFFICIAL DAMPER ON PUBLICITY ABOUT SUCH EVENTS NOT UNCOMMON IN ZAMBIA, COMPLETE LACK OF DETAILS THIS INCIDENT SO FAR, INCLUDING FAILURE EVEN TO IDENTIFY VICTIMS AS ZAMBIANS, LEADS US TO WONDER IF THOSE INVOLVED MAY NOT HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF ONE OR ANOTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENT. WHILE IT POSSIBLE EANDMINE MAY HAVE BEEN LAID BY FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, EXPLOSION COULD HAVE ALSO RESULTED FROM IMPROPER HANDLING BY RHODESIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS WHO ARE KNOWN TO HAVE CAMPS IN ZAMBEZI VALLEY OR EVEN FROM FEUD AMONG THEMSELVES. WE SEEKING OBTAIN FURTHER DETAILS THIS INCIDENT.
WILKOWSKI

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